

VZCZCXYZ0007
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLM #0248 0471107
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 161107Z FEB 06
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2581
INFO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0356
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1017

UNCLAS COLOMBO 000248

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AORC](#) [CE](#) [UN](#)

SUBJECT: SRI LANKA NOMINATION OF MFA LEGAL ADVISER ROHAN
PERERA TO INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION

¶1. (U) Ambassador was requested to come in by Foreign Secretary Palihakkara Feb 16 to discuss the candidacy of Sri

SIPDIS

Lankan MFA Legal Adviser Rohan Perera to the International Law Commission (ILC). At the last minute, Foreign Secretary was detained at the President's office, so meeting was conducted instead by Additional Secretary Geeta de Silva. Perera was also present.

¶2. (U) De Silva said that the Asian Group had been unable to agree on a list of candidates for their seats on the ILC, and as a result there were nine candidates for seven seats. Sri Lanka felt that regional balance would be better achieved if Sri Lanka were elected, as there was only one other South Asian candidate (India), while there were five candidates from West Asia, including Iran and Syria. She reviewed Perera's qualifications, including his ongoing Chairmanship of the committee negotiating the Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism. She handed over an aide memoire detailing Perera's qualifications. (Aide memoire being faxed to SA/INS.) The vote would take place in October in the General Assembly.

¶3. (U) Perera noted that the ILC, which met for two months each summer, was a mix of academicians and MFA legal practitioners. There was some criticism of the latter, because they often found it difficult to attend a two-month session. Perera noted that he would retire from the MFA next year, and hence would have ample time to devote to the ILC.

¶4. (U) Ambassador stated that he would relay Sri Lanka's support for Dr. Perera to Washington.

¶5. (SBU) COMMENT: The importance of this issue for Sri Lanka is underlined by the fact that the MFA is demarching other government some eight months before the election. Rohan Perera is well-known to the Embassy, and has always impressed us as extremely competent and fair, and friendly to the US. Many in New York and Washington also know him, especially through his work on the Terrorism Convention.
LUNSTEAD